

From: Kevin Kelly [mailto:kevink59@gmail.com]  
Sent: Saturday, May 25, 2013 1:00 PM  
To: Kobayashi, Ann; Office of Councilmember Stanley Chang  
Cc: Martin, Ernie; Fukunaga, Carol A  
Subject: Council Meeting Testimony Grant-In-Aid amendment, Bill 11 (2013), CD2

Dear Budget Chair Kobayashi, Co-chair Chang and members of the Budget Committee,

As a member of the North Shore Chamber of Commerce, the Chairman of its North Shore Economic Vitality Partnership Committee, and resident of Waialua, I strongly urge you to support the Grant-in-Aid Amendment, Bill 11 (2013), CD2, including \$25,000 to support the North Shore Economic Clusters of Opportunity Strategic Plan.

The lack of economic opportunity, higher than average unemployment, a low-wage, service-driven economy and a high cost of living are the underlying drivers of increased homelessness, drug use and the departure of young kamaaina from the region. These problems underscore the urgency and explain the community focus on increased job creation and economic diversification that builds on the region's historical backbone of agriculture and tourism.

This Economic Cluster planning process is well underway and having received pledges of \$95,000 from a broad spectrum of the community, including Kamehameha Schools, The Atherton Family Foundation, Turtle Bay Resort, the State Office of Hawaiian Affairs, First Wind, Kualoa Ranch, Kahuku Sugar Mill, Van's Triple Crown of Surfing, Monsanto, Lucky and Marilyn Cole, Syngenta, Kua Aina Burgers and Scott Wallace, we are actively examining next-generation data to identify opportunities and gaps of economic activity in the region. The people and businesses we have already engaged are building bridges between industry sectors, engaging in discussion, and developing a new generation of civic leaders in our community.

In addition to providing direct support to the project, the commitment of the City & County of Honolulu (C&C) will allow us to compete for federal dollars including EDA and USDA rural community awards. The proposed grant-in-aid will help empower this community and allow it to make well-informed, data-driven decision regarding economic expansion in the region. With C&C engagement, we expect to be able to continue to self-fund this activity moving forward.

Across the country rural regions are partnering with the private sector through the cluster process to drive economic recovery and expansion. We hope you agree and will support the Grant-in-Aid Amendment, Bill 11 (2013), CD2.

Aloha,

Kevin Kelly  
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